

# Trustee Board Training Focus: Community Needs Assessment, Strategic Planning, & Advocacy



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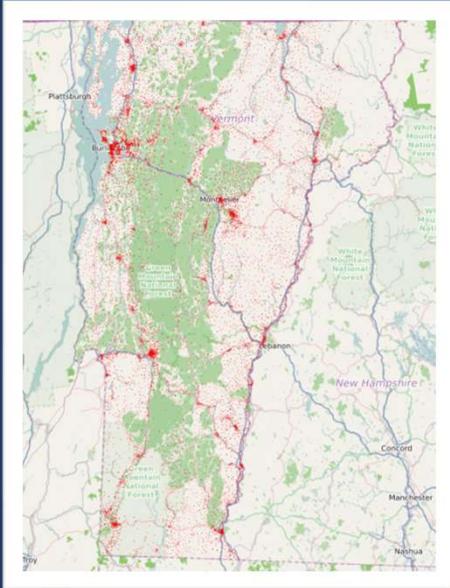
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How do you know if  
Your Library  
meets the needs of its  
patrons?

Community Needs  
Assessment as an  
Integral Part of  
Strategic Planning

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## Initial Information Gathering: Community Assessments By Others & Census Data

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Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nwplanning/30130854111/>

## What other local groups have done a community needs assessment/survey recently?

- Town Plan? Town Department Effort?
- Another Nonprofit, Civic, or Religious Organization?
- What did they learn that you can build from?

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## Census Data

- Michael Moser – UVM Center for Rural Studies
  - 802-656-0864
  - Michael.Moser@uvm.edu
- American Community Survey: 5-year Increment Sampling of Census Data (for smaller towns): <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>

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## The Importance of Turning Outward:



Expert Knowledge vs.  
Public/Community Knowledge

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## How Do You Find Out Your Community's Needs?

- Focus Groups?
- Surveys? – How administer? Where administer?
- Go out into the community? – grocery, coffee shop, farmer's market, community events, etc.
- Go to community meetings? – Rotary, PTA, Church Groups, etc.
- **What questions do you ask, how do you ask them, and who does the asking?**

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## Meeting Community Needs

- How do you assess the current and future needs of your community? Why is this important to do?
- Which of these needs should (and can) be addressed by the library, given the library's limitations?
- Should the library partner with other organizations to meet certain needs? (Create library advocates)
- How does the library's mission statement/vision help guide you to an answer? Strategic Planning?

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## Community Needs & Strategic Planning

- Aspen Institute Action Guide V. 2.0:  
<http://bit.ly/AspenAction>
- Harwood Institute Turning Outward Tools:  
<http://theharwoodinstitute.org/tools/>
  - ALA Turning Outward Tools for Libraries:  
<http://bit.ly/ALATurning>
- VT Department of Libraries Professional Collection

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## Advocacy: Community Connections

- Talking up your library & getting others to talk up your library
- Talking Points you can use & get others to use on your behalf.
- Solicit Patron Stories to Share: How has the library changed your life? What do you love about the library?

Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/volunteermatch/27677155485/>

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## Ideas for Working Together

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## Community Needs Assessment



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/airbnb/13915193802/>

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## Ideas for Working Together

# Community-Wide Initiatives



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/niallkennedy/9587071278/>

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## Ideas for Working Together

# Research Assistance & Information Dissemination



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/pamwood707/5646757752>

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## How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries serve as a Community Hub - bringing the entire community together



Source: Burnham Mem. Lib. Facebook Page

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## How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries are vital to a functioning democracy



Varnum Memorial Library, Cambridge

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## How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries provide a **space** for educational, social, cultural, and recreational engagement



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sanjoselibrary/31234520260>

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## How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries help your taxpayers connect with local government.



South Burlington Public Library

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## How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries are the ultimate renewable resource



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/awesomelibraryservices/16393118653>

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## How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries Offer a Fantastic ROI\*

\*Library Value Calculator  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/library-value-calculator>



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/143843618@N03>

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## Advocacy: Community Connections

- United for Libraries: Power Guide for Successful Advocacy: <http://www.ala.org/united/powerguide>
- Turning the Page Library Advocacy Training: <http://www.publiclibraryadvocacy.org/>
- Tribute: Library Patrons Expressing Love – Pierson Library: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFwS4\\_cllJo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFwS4_cllJo)

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## Contact Me

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